



A Guide for Child Safety Ages 12-17



Each of the “teachable moments” below present an important safety situation or choice that could be faced by children ages 12 to 17. Duracell and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) encourage you to use the guide below as a simple tool to help start a conversation with your children about safety – both in the real world and on the Internet. We hope that you will engage your children by asking questions and giving “real-life” examples that relate back to each of the “rules” below.

Internet Safety

I will never respond to any online communication that makes me feel uncomfortable.

Teachable Moment: Visit www.NetSmartz.org and watch the real-life story “Broken Friendship” with your children.

- Cyberbullies use technology such as e-mail, instant messaging, cell phones and Web sites to spread rumors and gossip, steal passwords to assume someone else’s identity, post pictures of someone without their consent and threaten or harass with offensive language.
- Teach children not to respond to rude and harassing e-mails, messages and postings. Children should keep a record of them so that you have evidence if necessary. Make a report at www.cybertipline.com and contact your Internet service or cell phone provider if the problem becomes serious.
- Remind children to keep their personal information private and to only share their passwords with you. Help them create strong passwords and change them often.

Conversation Starters

- How did sharing her password affect the girl in the video?
- Do you share your passwords with your friends? Has anyone ever used them to betray your trust?

I will never meet anyone in person whom I have first “met” online without discussing it with my parents or guardian.

Teachable Moment: Visit www.NetSmartz.org and watch the real-life story “Julie’s Journey” with your children.

- Children should never meet in person whom they first “met” online. Talk to them about the fact that people they meet online might not have their best interests in mind and might not be who they say they are.
- Teens crave attention and affection from others. Tell your teens that it’s important to seek that attention from people who will not hurt them. Make sure your teens have trusted adults they can turn to for help. It is important that they feel comfortable talking to you about people with whom they are connecting online. Be open and encourage them to confide in you.

Conversation Starters

- Why do you think Julie ran away with this man?
- What could Julie have done differently to keep herself safer?
- How do people you’ve first met online try to get you to trust them?

“Real-Life” Scenarios

1. What would you do if someone you first met online asked you to meet in person?
 - Even though this person may seem trustworthy, your children should never accept an invitation to meet in person with someone they first met online. It’s impossible to tell a person’s true identity on the Internet.
2. How do you decide what information you should or should not post on the Internet?
 - Stress that any information your children post online can’t be taken back. Children should think before they post, and not post their or their friends’ personal information or messages that may be considered mean or harassing.

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Real-World Safety

I will tell an adult where I am going at all times.

Teachable Moment: Have a safety discussion with your children before they leave the house.

- Your children can better protect themselves by keeping their parents or guardians informed about their activities. If they find themselves in a risky situation or get into trouble, you will know where to find them.
- Let your children know that this rule is a two-way street. You will let them know where you go and how to contact you. That way they know where to reach you if there is ever a problem.
- If your children have permission to be somewhere and their plans change, they should know to contact you. They should always inform you of any change in location or people with whom they are spending time.

Conversation Starters

- What is the best and easiest way for you to tell me the details of your whereabouts?
- What are the different ways I can reach you in an emergency?
- Why do you think it is important for me to know where you are at all times?

I have the right to say “No.”

Teachable Moment: Have a safety discussion with your children while teaching them about self-confidence and resisting peer pressures.

- Inform children about their right to reject unwanted and inappropriate attention such as teasing, touching and bullying.
- Teach them to trust their intuition and take a firm stand against anyone who makes them feel uncomfortable.

Conversation Starters

- Do you feel OK telling me if another person, even someone we know, makes you feel uncomfortable?
- How would you stand up for yourself if someone approaches you and makes you feel weird or uncomfortable?
- Who are two other adults you trust that you can turn to for help if I am not available?

“Real-Life” Scenarios

1. What would you do if your friends were making a decision that put you in an uncomfortable situation?
 - Reinforce that your teens should turn to you or another adult they trust for help and they should never be afraid to stand up for themselves and say “NO!” They also can try to encourage their friends to make better decisions.
2. You’re at a football game with your friends and you end up meeting someone who seems like a fun and interesting person and who is obviously interested in you. He/she asks you to hang out after the game but doesn’t invite your friends. What would you do?
 - Your children should check first with you and never leave with someone they just met, especially alone. If they are unable to ask for permission, then they should not go with the person, even if they or their friends want to.

Tips For Parents

Open the lines of communication with your children regarding their safety and help them feel comfortable enough to come to you – their trusted adult.

- This type of communication and guidance fosters positive relationships and confidence, and empowers teens to make better choices about their personal safety.
- Look for other teachable moments that may occur to reinforce safety conversations with your children. Use news reports, articles, or television shows that you see together to start discussions with your children on these topics.
- For more tips and videos about Internet and real-world safety, visit www.NetSmartz.org.

